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ABSTRACT

The specific effects of the Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) Program were examined through onsite interviews with project directors, workstation supervisors, and volunteers at 18 YVA projects in their second year of ACTION funding. Principal topics were accomplishment of YVA's poverty goals; effects of YVA on the workstation, volunteerism, and the volunteer; and evidence of institutionalization of YVA. If measured by income of program participants, the projects could be considered weak in accomplishing YVA's poverty goals. YVA volunteers were important sources of support to the workstation in terms of the workstations' ability to increase services provided to the community. The YVA projects were considered highly successful in terms of promoting a spirit of volunteerism among youth. YVA volunteers appeared to have gained important experience that will be useful in making the transition to becoming responsible community members. One YVA program objective was to develop self-sustaining volunteer opportunities for youth. Six projects reported full funding for the third year of operations; eight reported partial funding. Recommendations were continuation of volunteer opportunities for young Americans by ACTION and development of guidelines and technical assistance for recruiting low-income youth. (YLB)

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YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION (YVA)

EFFECTS EVALUATION:

Final Report

ACTION

Office of Compliance

Evaluation Division

June 1986

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
List of Tables.		i
Executive Summary.		iii
I.	INTRODUCTION	
	A. Purpose.	1
	B. Young Volunteers in ACTION Program.	1
	C. Methodology	2
	D. Tabulation, Weighting, and Analysis of Data.	3
	E. Definitions	5
II.	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	
	A. YVA Volunteers	7
	B. YVA Projects and Workstations	9
	C. The Recipients	9
	D. Comparison to Previous Data	10
III.	THE YVA PROJECT	
	A. Project Sponsors.	13
	B. Project Advisory Councils.	13
	C. YVA Projects	13
	D. YVA Workstations.	15
IV.	EFFECT ON YOUTH VOLUNTEERS	
	A. Effects of YVA on Youth Volunteerism	17
	B. Effects of YVA on the Volunteer.	22
V.	INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF YVA	
	A. Development of Local Funding.	29
	B. Community Support for the YVA Program.	35
IV.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
	A. Accomplishment of YVA Poverty Goals	41
	B. Effects of YVA on the Workstation	41
	C. Effects of YVA on Volunteerism	42
	D. Effects of YVA on the Volunteer.	42
	E. Institutionalization of YVA	43
	F. Recommendations	44

LIST OF TABLES

Number		Page
1.	YVA Volunteer Demographic Characteristics	7
2.	Recipient Demographic Characteristics.	10
3.	Comparison of Volunteer and Recipient Demographics with Volunteer and Recipient Demographics from the 1983 Survey	11
4.	Groups that Advisory Council Members Represented	14
5.	Effect on Workstation Services Due to the Assignment of YVA Volunteers	16
6.	Places Where Volunteers First Heard About YVA	18
7.	Reasons for Becoming a YVA Volunteer	18
8.	Extent to Which Directors Perceived Their YVA Projects to Have Accomplished Program Goals.	21
9.	Continued Involvement In Volunteering by YVA Volunteers.	21
10.	Frequency of Service by the Volunteers	22
11.	YVA Volunteer Roles.	23
12.	Self-Assessment by YVA Volunteers and Assessment of YVA Volunteers by Workstation Supervisors.	25
13.	Positive Difference Made by Their Work as Perceived by the YVA Volunteers	26
14.	Gaining of Understanding through the YVA Experience	26
15.	Project Funding for the Third Year.	30
16.	Source of Funds Equal to 15% of Federal Contribution for the Second Year of Operation for Projects Having No, Partial, or Full Third-Year Funding	31
17.	Source of Project Funding for the Third Year for Projects Having Partial or Full Funding	33
18.	Groups Represented on the Advisory Council for Projects Having No, Partial, or Full Third-Year Funding	34

Number		Page
19.	Rating by Project Directors of Assistance Received for Transition to Non-ACTION Funding . . .	35
20.	Project Directors' Ratings of Involvement of Parents and Other Community Members in the YVA Project.	36
21.	Average Percentages of Junior and Senior High Schools Involved in 18 YVA Projects.	38
22.	Average Percentages of Universities and Colleges Involved in 18 YVA Projects	39

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Purpose

The Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) Program was developed by the ACTION Agency in 1981. YVA gives students, age 14 to 22, a chance to become involved in their communities while exploring career interests. As YVA volunteers, youth participate in a wide range of activities including tutoring, serving in parks and recreation centers, assisting in hospitals, fighting drug and alcohol abuse, etc. Sponsors (grantees) for YVA projects include federal, state and local agencies, and private non-profit organizations. Each project has a project director who is an employee of the sponsoring organization and an advisory council which aids the sponsor and project director.

ACTION funding is provided on the basis of a formula which is tied to the number of volunteer hours provided. Project sponsors are responsible for a minimum of 10% of the federal cost in the first year and 25% in the second.

This study, the YVA Effects Evaluation, examines specific effects of the Young Volunteers in ACTION Program. This is the second evaluation of YVA but the first measurement of YVA effects. The first evaluation (Young Volunteers in ACTION Goal Accomplishment and Perceived Outcomes Evaluation 1983 Telephone Survey) involved a telephone survey of nine YVA project directors in November 1982 and site visits to three projects in April 1983.

Methodology

The study design for the evaluation included one round of on-site interviews with project directors, workstation supervisors, and volunteers at 18 YVA projects in their second year of ACTION funding and a second round of data collection with the same project directors in the form of telephone interviews which took place approximately four months after the on-site data collection, in the last month of ACTION funding. These two data collections measured the:

- accomplishment of YVA's poverty goals,
- effects of YVA on the workstation,
- effects of YVA on volunteerism,
- effects of YVA on the volunteer, and
- evidence of institutionalization of YVA.

Upon completion of the interviews for this evaluation, the 27 persons who collected data at the 18 YVA projects were themselves interviewed to collect some of their impressions and observations.

This evaluation focuses on those YVA projects that were in their second year of ACTION funding in Spring 1985. Second-year projects were selected as minimal effects would be realized in the first year of operation. Examining the projects in their second year of funding also permitted the collection of information on the transition to non-ACTION funding and other aspects of institutionalization.

The 18 projects that participated in the evaluation had their headquarters in these cities:

Asheville, North Carolina
Bronx, New York
Cheyenne, Wyoming
Chicago, Illinois
Elmira, New York
Fulton, New York
Hartford, Connecticut
Jackson, Mississippi
Keene, New Hampshire
Livingston Manor, New York
Muscle Shoals, Alabama
New York, New York
Omaha, Nebraska
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Randolph, Vermont
Santa Ana, California
Ukiah, California
Woodbury, New Jersey

As eleven projects had more than city-wide service areas, the volunteers and workstations were found in more than these 18 cities.

The data for this evaluation are representative of the YVA projects that were in their second year of ACTION funding during Fiscal Year 1985 but may not be representative of all 156 YVA projects that have received ACTION funding since the beginning of the YVA Program.

Findings

Most YVA volunteers were female (57%), white (73%), in high school (70%), and between the ages of 14 and 18 (82%). There was a fairly even break between urban (51%) and rural (49%) residence. By the volunteers' own estimation, the family income of the volunteers was 3% poor, 7% near poor, 61% average, and 30% above average. The volunteers in the evaluation had served an average of 8.4 months and provided an average of 5.7 hours a week of service. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the volunteers were providing service for the first time.

Eighty-six percent (86%) of the volunteers reported that they worked directly with the people served by their workstations.

The YVA project directors estimated that, at the 18 projects in the evaluation, approximately 104,000 community members benefitted from YVA volunteers' service--14,000 through direct contact and 90,000 through indirect contact.

Forty-nine percent (49%) of the recipients of YVA services were poor (31%) or near poor (18%).

The YVA workstation is the place where the YVA volunteer actually provides volunteer service. There was an average of 15 workstations per project with a range of 8 to 51 workstations. The workstation supervisors at almost three-quarters of the workstations felt that there was an increase in services at the workstations as a result of the presence of YVA volunteers. About half of the supervisors felt that services were continued at the workstation which might not have been continued without the aid of YVA volunteers and new services were started at the workstation as a result of the presence of YVA volunteers. The use of YVA volunteers also represented the first time 38% of the workstations had used youth volunteers.

The overwhelming majority of the volunteers first heard about YVA at school. When presented a list of possible reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer, 89% said they did so out of a desire to help others; 70% wanted a new experience or to meet new and different people. Close to two-thirds said they wanted to learn new skills and close to half said they wanted career experience. Those volunteers who joined YVA because they wanted career experience, to learn new skills, or new experience tended to work more hours and report to the workstations more frequently than those volunteers who joined for other reasons.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot", the youth rated their satisfaction in serving as a YVA volunteer as a 4.5 (average rating) with 93% of the volunteers selecting the two highest ratings (4 or 5). Of the reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer, satisfaction was only found to be significantly positively associated with having become a YVA volunteer because of the desire to obtain career experience. There was also a significant positive association between the number of hours worked and the degree of satisfaction.

The YVA volunteers, when asked to rate the likelihood that they would continue to do volunteer work in school, do volunteer work as an adult, and encourage others to do volunteer work, appeared to be slightly more inclined to encourage others to do volunteer work than to continue to do volunteer work themselves. Nevertheless, there is an indication of continued volunteer work among the YVA volunteers in this evaluation.

Self-assessments by the volunteers as well as assessments of the volunteers by their workstation supervisors at two points in time--when they first became YVA volunteers and at the time of the interviews--indicated an increased sense of self-esteem among the volunteers during the time they served as YVA volunteers.

The data indicate that the youth gained a better sense of their career plans while being YVA volunteers. Through their volunteer experience they also gained a better understanding of how they can help their communities, community needs or problems, how organizations work, and themselves.

The institutionalization of YVA refers to the development of youth volunteer projects which will continue after federal support ends. The primary aspect of institutionalization on which this evaluation focuses is the development of local funding sources since not having funding could mean an end to a local project. Of the 18 projects in the evaluation, six (33%) reported having full funding for the third year, eight (44%) reported having partial funding, and four (22%) no funding.

The data suggest that early involvement of outside funding sources as well as early sponsor support are important in continuing the project. The sponsor was the most likely and largest source for third-year funding; however, no one type of funding source could be identified as being associated with a large number of projects receiving full funding. Although the involvement of parents, schools, and community members was important for institutionalization in general, the participation of such persons and groups was found to be unrelated to third-year funding.

Conclusions

If measured by the income of the program participants, the projects could be considered weak in accomplishing YVA's poverty goals. Just under half of the recipients of YVA services were rated by the YVA workstation supervisors to have an income status of poor or near poor, and, based on the YVA volunteers' self-assessments, 10% of the volunteers came from families with a poor or near poor income status. The data collected as well as the impressionistic accounts of the data collectors for this evaluation indicate that sponsors and project directors would benefit from additional technical guidance on how to recruit volunteers from low-income families.

YVA volunteers were important sources of support to the workstations in terms of the ability of the workstations to increase the services they provided to the community. Workstation supervisors also indicated that YVA volunteers

significantly contributed to the continuation of services that otherwise might have discontinued or were the reason why it was able to start new services. There was also an indication of improvement of the general delivery services of the organizations of which the YVA workstations were a part.

The YVA projects may be considered highly successful in terms of promoting a spirit of volunteerism among youth. A significant number of the YVA volunteers used the YVA project as an opportunity to volunteer for the first time and a large percentage of the YVA workstations used youth volunteers for the first time as the result of the YVA project. There is also evidence to suggest that many of the youth may continue to do volunteer work in the future and to suggest volunteer work to their friends. The willingness of YVA volunteers to recommend volunteering to their friends is important since the second most frequent way in which YVA volunteers first heard about YVA was through a friend; school was the first most frequent way.

YVA volunteers appear to have gained important experience which will be useful to themselves in making the transition from being students to being responsible members of their communities. The young people who served as YVA volunteers gained a better understanding of their career objectives; improved their ability to work with their supervisors, and decreased in their need for supervision. They also developed their ability to work with community members and increased their sense of community service and self-esteem. A positive association was found between two measures of the volunteer's level of effort--the number of hours the volunteer works per week and the frequency of the volunteer reporting to the workstation--and the volunteer's clarification of occupational and educational plans. It seems likely that volunteers who view the YVA program as a means to clarifying their plans are more motivated to work harder.

One of the objectives of the YVA program was to develop self-sustaining volunteer opportunities for youth. Thirty-three percent (33%), or six, of the projects reported having full funding for the third year of operations, and 44%, or eight, reported having partial funding. Third-year funding status did not change in the last several months of federal funding. Further, it was found that third-year funding status may be strongly related to early sponsor support. Although sponsors were the most likely and largest average source for third-year funding, no one source of funding could be consistently identified with providing full third-year funding. Even with strong sponsor support, most YVA projcts had more than one source for third-year funding.

Recommendations

Based on the positive effect of the YVA program on the promotion of volunteerism, the exposure of volunteers to experiences which will make them more responsible members of their communities, the development of self-esteem among youth volunteers which is shown in the data collected, it is recommended that ACTION continue to provide and/or encourage volunteer opportunities for young Americans. However, it would appear beneficial to develop guidelines and technical assistance for recruiting low-income youth.

In the creation of volunteer opportunities for youth, one of the most successful methods of alerting youth to such opportunities was through their schools. It is recommended that working with schools be considered a principal focus of such programs.

It appears that youth are willing to work hard in a volunteer program if they perceive that the program will be of personal benefit to them, particularly in terms of developing their career and educational plans. It is recommended that volunteer programs for youth recognize and promote their career and educational interests as a way of attracting youth to volunteer service in exchange for a rewarding experience which will also be of benefit to their community.

In terms of the continuance of such projects after the end of ACTION funding, it appears that projects that received strong support from their sponsors were those that were most likely to continue, even if all of their third-year funding did not come from their sponsors. In funding youth projects, it would seem prudent to attempt to identify sponsors who indicate a strong willingness to provide assistance beyond that required by the grant.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This study, the YVA Effects Evaluation, examines specific effects of the Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) Program. This is the second evaluation of YVA but the first measurement of YVA effects. The first evaluation (Young Volunteers in ACTION Goal Accomplishment and Perceived Outcomes Evaluation 1983 Telephone Survey) involved a telephone survey of nine YVA project directors in November 1982 and site visits to three projects in April 1983.

This evaluation was conducted under authority of Section 416(a) of Public Law 93-113, "The Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973," as amended by Public Law 98-288, "The Domestic Volunteer Service Act Amendments of 1984." This section states that the Director of ACTION "shall biennially measure and evaluate the impact of all programs authorized by this Act, their effectiveness in achieving stated goals in general, and in relation to their costs, their impact on related programs and their structure and mechanism for delivery of service."

Young Volunteers in ACTION Program

The YVA program was started in 1981 under the authority of Title I, Part B of Public Law 93-113, "The Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973," as amended. The YVA program lets grants to qualified federal, state, local agencies, or private, non-profit organizations. The purpose and objectives of YVA are described as follows in the YVA Guidelines that were published in the Federal Register on August 12, 1982:

> This program intends to mobilize the efforts of full or part-time students, ages 14-22, in a focused, effective way to respond as volunteers to work on a part-time, non-stipended basis. The purpose and objectives of this program are:
>
> To provide for a program of part-time or short term service-learning by secondary, secondary vocational, and post-secondary students and to strengthen and supplement efforts to reduce or eliminate poverty and poverty related human, social, and environmental problems while creating a sense of self worth and civic pride.

ACTION funding is provided on the basis of a formula which is tied to the number of volunteer hours provided. Grantees, also referred to as sponsors, are responsible for generating a minimum of 10% of the federal cost in the first year and 25% in the second. No ACTION funding is provided after the first two years, the expectation being that the local project will make the transition to its own funding.

Sponsors are responsible for hiring a project director and creating a project advisory council. The project director is in charge of the day-to-day management of the project including the selection of appropriate work assignments and volunteer workstations which will allow for service-learning opportunities for the volunteers.

The purpose of the project advisory council is to aid the sponsor and the project director in identifying the needs of the community, promote community support and identify sources of funding to permit the continuance of the YVA program after the conclusion of federal funding. Local civic group and government representatives often serve on the advisory councils of the projects.

YVA volunteers participate in a wide range of projects and activities including tutoring homebound students, serving in parks and recreation centers, helping weatherize homes, assisting in hospitals, fighting drug and alcohol abuse, and aiding disaster relief efforts. Youth in the program are encouraged to volunteer at least eight hours a month.

Currently, thirteen YVA projects are in their first year of funding; thirty are in their second, and last year of ACTION funding; an additional 113 projects have previously been funded. Approximately 40,000 young people have served as YVA volunteers. At the time of the data collection for this evaluation, 39 projects were in their first year of funding and 20 were in their second year.

Methodology

The study design for the evaluation included two rounds of data collection:

- One round of on-site interviews with project directors, workstation supervisors, and volunteers at 18 project sites.
- A second round of data collection with the same project directors in the form of telephone interviews which took place approximately four months after the on-site data collection, in the last month of ACTION funding.

The on-site and telephone surveys measured the:

- accomplishment of YVA's poverty goals,
- effects of YVA on the workstation,
- effects of YVA on volunteerism,
- effects of YVA on the volunteer, and
- evidence of institutionalization of YVA.

This evaluation focuses on those YVA projects which were in their second year of funding in Spring 1985. Second-year projects were selected as minimal effects would be realized in the first year of operation. Examining the projects in their second year of funding also permitted the collection of information on the transition to non-ACTION funding and other aspects of institutionalization.

There were twenty grantees in Fiscal Year 1985 receiving second-year funding for YVA projects, 18 of which are included in this evaluation. One site was excluded because the project had been reorganized and relocated, and was, in effect, a first year project even though it was in its second year of ACTION funding. Of the remaining 19 projects, one site was excluded because it was selected to pretest the survey instruments.

Two or three data collectors visited each site between April 28 and June 2, 1985. Volunteers to be interviewed were randomly selected at each of the 18 sites. Interviews were also conducted with the workstation supervisors of the randomly selected volunteers. Finally, all project directors were interviewed. The first round of data collection yielded completed interviews with 330 volunteers, 160 workstation supervisors, and 18 project directors.

The second round of data collection was a follow-up telephone interview with each of the 18 project directors which took place between August 30 and September 26, 1985. This data collection supplemented the on-site data collection and provided information on the transition to non-ACTION funding in the last month of ACTION funding.

Upon completion of the interviews for this evaluation, the 27 persons who collected data at the 18 YVA projects were themselves interviewed to collect some of their impressions and observations.

Tabulation, Weighting, and Analysis of Data

Although data were collected from 330 randomly selected volunteers, data were evaluated from only those 302 volunteers whose supervisors were also interviewed. An examination of age, race, sex, and income characteristics of the 302 volunteers

showed them to be virtually identical to the 330 for which questionnaires were administered, leading to the conclusion that the 302 volunteers for whom supervisor questionnaires are available are a representative sample. Interviews with nine workstation supervisors were also excluded from the evaluation because questionnaires were not completed with the volunteers they supervised, leaving 151 supervisors in the evaluation. Also included in the evaluation are data from the 18 project directors.

Because limited-size random samples of volunteers were selected at each of the 18 projects so as to contain the cost of this evaluation, the probability of selecting a volunteer into the sample varied by site. This sample design made it necessary to weight the data by the inverse of the probability of selection at each of the sites so that no one site would be weighted too greatly. This procedure serves to appropriately weight the sample data up to the actual population of volunteers at each of the projects before computing means and percentages. The N's reported in this evaluation, however, are for the actual sample population that responded to the question.

A limitation in the current evaluation is the lack of appropriate weights for the workstation supervisors who were selected on the basis of their supervision of the randomly selected volunteers. Means and percentages for workstation supervisors are, therefore, based on sample rather than population totals. Sample N's are reported.

To assess the practical effect of the lack of appropriate weights for the supervisor data, means and percentages were compared for the weighted and unweighted volunteer data. The examination of these data for such an assessment is considered reasonable because the two surveys are linked (workstation supervisors are matched with the volunteers). The conclusion was that the weights had very little effect on the evaluation of the volunteer data. Based on these results the effect of the lack of appropriate weights for the supervisor survey is judged to be small.

The sample of project directors was virtually the same as the universe of project directors. No weights were needed or used.

The information collected during on-site and telephone follow-up interviews was evaluated using frequency distributions, crosstabulations, percentages, means, and correlation coefficients.

Definitions

Income Status:

Above Average: Upper middle class or affluent

Average: Significantly above the poverty line but not affluent

Near Poor: Slightly above the poverty line AND not receiving any form of public assistance

Poor: Right at or below the poverty line OR receiving some form of public assistance, e.g., food stamps

Rural/Urban Status:

Rural: Areas which have fewer than 50,000 inhabitants

Urban: Areas which include one city with 50,000 or more inhabitants or a city with at least 25,000 inhabitants which together with contiguous places have a combined population of 50,000

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

YVA Volunteers

Who are these young Americans who do volunteer work as part of the Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) Program? Demographic information on the YVA volunteers is reported in Table 1.

TABLE 1

YVA VOLUNTEER DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Percent[a]	Characteristic	Percent[a]
SEX	(N=302)	ETHNIC BACKGROUND	(N=302)
Female	57	White[b]	73
Male	43	Black[b]	14
		Hispanic	10
AGE	(N=302)	Asian/Pacific Islander	3
12 years old	1	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1
13 "	2		
14 "	11	SCHOOL GRADE/YEAR	(N=300)
15 "	10	7th Grade	2
16 "	21	8th "	7
17 "	23	9th "	9
18 "	17	10th "	16
19 "	7	11th "	21
20 "	4	12th "	24
21 "	1	College Freshman	3
22 "	1	" Sophomore	3
23 "	2	" Junior	3
		" Senior	3
RESIDENCE	(N=296)	Graduate student	3
Urban	51	Not in school	4
Rural	49	Other	2
FAMILY INCOME STATUS	(N=284)		
Poor	3		
Near Poor	7		
Average	61		
Above Average	30		

[a] May not equal 100 due to rounding
[b] Not of Hispanic origin

Data for sex and ethnic background were based on the data collectors' observations. The rest of the demographic information, with the exception of the urban/rural data, was collected from the volunteers. The urban/rural designations were obtained from the workstation supervisors.

As shown in Table 1, most volunteers were female (57%), white (73%), in high school (70%), and between the ages of 14 and 18 (82%). There was a fairly even break between urban and rural residence (51% to 49%). In addition, 2% of them considered themselves to be handicapped.

According to the federal guidelines, the program was "to strengthen and supplement efforts to eliminate poverty and poverty related human, social and environmental problems..." As shown in Table 1, 10% of the volunteers reported that they came from poor (3%) or near poor (7%) families.*

The project directors rated the extent to which they targeted their recruitment to involve students from poverty level families. The average was 3.3 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "slightly" and 5 "exclusively" (N=18). Half of the project directors, however, selected one of the two highest ratings (4 or 5) and one-third (33%) selected the middle rating (3). This would indicate that the projects had attempted to place low-income students as volunteers but were not highly successful on the average.

The YVA volunteers in the evaluation had served an average of 8.4 months (N=301) and provided an average of 5.7 hours a week of service (N=289).

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* The data collectors at three of the eighteen (17%) data collection sites (projects) suggested that the information on the volunteers' family income might not be completely reliable. It was felt that some volunteers overestimated their family incomes by rating their family incomes in relation to the other families in their communities rather than following the definitions provided them. Based on this information, this data was recomputed without the three projects where it was thought the data might not be accurate which yielded these results: 1% poor, 4% near poor, 61% average, and 34% above average (N=233). The data was also recomputed with the data from these three projects adjusted downwards (above average = average, average = near poor, near poor and poor = poor) to adjust for the suspected inflated estimates. The results were: 6% poor, 14% near poor, 52% average, and 28% above average (N=284). As both the volunteers' responses and the data collectors' observations were based on perception, the original data as reported by the volunteers is used in this report.

A goal of YVA is to mobilize full- or part-time students aged 14-22. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the volunteers reported that they were students (N=300) and 95% were 14-22 years old (N=302). Another YVA goal is to have each volunteer serve an average of eight hours a month. These volunteers reported that they served an average of 5.7 hours a week (N=289).

YVA Projects and Workstations

The 18 projects that participated in the evaluation had their headquarters in these cities:

Asheville, NC	Hartford, CT	Omaha, NE
Bronx, NY	Jackson, MS	Philadelphia, PA
Cheyenne, WY	Keene, NH	Randolph, VT
Chicago, IL	Livingston Manor, NY	Santa Ana, CA
Elmira, NY	Muscle Shoals, AL	Ukiah, CA
Fulton, NY	New York, NY	Woodbury, NJ

Overall, there was an average of 105 volunteers per site. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the volunteers served recipients in urban areas; 41% served recipients in rural areas.

As 11 projects had more than city-wide service areas, the volunteers and workstations were found in more than these 18 cities. There was an average of 15 workstations per project with a range of 8 to 51 (N=18). More information on the projects and workstations is in Chapter III, The YVA Project.

The Recipients

The demographic characteristics of the persons served, either directly or indirectly, by the YVA volunteers is reported in Table 2. Eighty-six percent (86%) of the volunteers reported that they worked directly with the people served by their workstations (N=300). The YVA project directors estimated that, at these 18 projects, approximately 104,000 community members benefitted from YVA volunteers' services--14,000 through direct contact and 90,000 through indirect contact.

The sex, age, and ethnic background data in Table 2 were reported by the volunteers; the residence and income status data were reported by the workstation supervisors. The volunteers had also estimated the income status of the recipients, but it was felt that the workstation supervisors were in a better position to make this determination as they were more familiar with the recipients' situations.

TABLE 2

RECIPIENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Percent	Characteristic	Percent
SEX	(N=269)	ETHNIC BACKGROUND	(N=272)
Female	51	White[a]	60
Male	49	Black[a]	23
		Hispanic	13
AGE	(N=269)	Asian/Pacific Islander	3
10 years or less	30	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	2
11-15 years	18		
16-21 years	19		
22-45 years	10		
46-59 years	7		
60 years and older	16	INCOME STATUS	(N=271)
		Poor	31
RESIDENCE	(N=292)	Near Poor	18
Urban	51	Average	34
Rural	49	Above Average	17

[a]Not of Hispanic origin

In support of the program's goal of strengthening and supplementing efforts to eliminate poverty and poverty related problems, 49% of the recipients of YVA services were poor (31%) or near poor (18%) (N=271).

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "slightly" and 5 "exclusively", the project directors rated the extent to which they targeted the placement of volunteers so that they were serving low-income people. The average rating was 3.4 (N=18). Sixty-seven percent (67%) selected one of the two highest ratings (4 or 5).

In addition, the volunteers estimated that 20% of the recipients were handicapped (N=278) and 4% were refugees (N=275).

Comparison to Previous Data

"The YVA Goal Accomplishment and Perceived Outcomes Evaluation 1983 Telephone Survey" gathered data at nine of the 12 original YVA projects. The demographic data from this survey are shown in Table 3 along with data from the current evaluation. The

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF VOLUNTEER AND RECIPIENT DEMOGRAPHICS[a]
WITH VOLUNTEER AND RECIPIENT DEMOGRAPHICS FROM THE 1983 SURVEY

Characteristic	YVA VOLUNTEERS		RECIPIENTS	
	1983[b] Survey	1986[c] Eval.	1983[b] Survey	1986[c] Eval.
SEX	(N=8)	(N=302)	(N=5)	(N=269)
Female	71%	57%	57%	51%
Male	29	43	43	49
AGE	(N=8)	(N=302)		
12-13 years	0%	3%		
14-16 "	48	42		
17-18 "	32	40		
19-20 "	12	11		
21 yrs. and older	8	4		
			(N=6)	(N=269)
10 yrs. or less			35%	30%
11-15 years			16	18
16-21 "			8	19
22-45 years			7	10
46-59 "			1	7
60 yrs. and older			33	16
INCOME STATUS	(N=6)	(N=284)	(N=6)	(N=271)[d]
Poor	6%	3%	27%	31%
Near Poor	8	7	31	18
Average	64	61	37	34
Above Average	22	30	5	17
ETHNIC BACKGROUND	(N=7)	(N=302)	(N=7)	(N=272)
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0%	1%	0%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	3	2	3
Black (Not Hispanic)	17	14	25	23
Hispanic	3	10	5	13
White (Not Hispanic)	78	73	67	60

[a] Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.
[b] N's shown are for project directors. Percentages are based on averages of percentages reported by the directors.
[c] Based on questions asked of volunteers except as noted
[d] Based on supervisors' assessments of each volunteer's recipients

previous data are based on estimates by the nine project directors; the current data are based on information collected from the volunteers and workstation supervisors. If the current data are compared to that previously collected, there appears to be:

- an increase in male YVA volunteer (14%) and recipient (20%) participation;
- larger participation in the 17-18 year old age-group volunteers (8%) with a decrease in the 14-16 (6%) and 21 and older (4%) age groups;
- an increase in male YVA volunteer (14%) and recipient (20%) participation;
- larger participation in the 17-18 year old age-group volunteers (8%) with a decrease in the 14-16 (6%) and 21 and older (4%) age groups;
- an increase in recipients in the 16-21 (11%) and 46-59 (8%) age groups and a decrease in the 60 years and older age group (17%); and
- an increase in participation by non-White volunteers (5%) and recipients (7%).

There was a decrease in volunteers (5%) and recipients (9%) having either a poor or near poor family income status among the participants in the present evaluation. However, the comparison may not be completely valid as the previous data were collected from 6 project directors and the current data from 284 volunteers and the workstation supervisors of 271 volunteers.

THE YVA PROJECT

Project Sponsors

Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) project sponsors are federal, state, or local agencies and private, nonprofit organizations or foundations which have received grants to operate a YVA project. A sponsor is responsible for all programmatic and fiscal aspects of the project, including employing and providing direction and support to the project director and establishing, orienting, and supporting an advisory council.

Of the 18 sponsors that had projects in the evaluation, one was a state agency, two were local agencies, and 15 were private, non-profit organizations.

Project Advisory Councils

Each YVA project has an advisory council which is to advise and assist the project director and sponsor in project planning, development, implementation, and monitoring. The advisory councils of the projects in the evaluation had from six to 30 members each with an average of 13 members (N=18).

The groups represented on the advisory councils in the evaluation are presented in Table 4. Education groups were most heavily represented (83%) with non-federal government and community and service groups not far behind (72%); the smallest representation was from parents and parent groups (22%) (N=18). All advisory councils also had at least one YVA volunteer as a voting member.

YVA Projects

Each YVA project is a locally planned and implemented activity agreed upon by ACTION and the project's sponsor. Eighteen such projects participated in this evaluation. Each YVA project has a geographically defined service area in which volunteers are recruited, enrolled, and placed on assignments. The service area is specified in the grant application. Of the project service areas in the study:

- two were neighborhood-specific,
- one was a large borough of a city,
- four were city wide,
- six were county-wide,
- four were multi-county wide, and
- one was state-wide.

TABLE 4

GROUPS THAT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTED

(N=18)

Type of Group	Percent of Projects
Schools, including school boards, boards of education, etc.; colleges, universities, etc.; student groups, etc.	83
Local, county, and state officials or organizations, including courts and DA's	72
Service, civic, and community groups and members	72
Business	56
Church, clergy and other religious organizations and individuals	39
Other non-profit organizations	33
Parents, including PTA's and other parent groups	22
Other[a]	44

[a]Did not appear to fit one of the other categories or could not be categorized from name given.

The project director for each project is an employee of the sponsoring organization and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the project. At the time of the on-site data collection, the projects were approximately 18 months old, and the 18 project directors had held their positions for an average of 15 months. Eight reported having been on the job eighteen months or more.

Of the 18 projects in the evaluation, 14 addressed the purposes and objectives of the program by providing a variety of volunteer opportunities. Four projects were more narrow in their focus: three addressed adolescent crisis situations, particularly substance abuse; and one provided one-on-one life maintenance skills services in the homes of elderly and handicapped persons.

YVA Workstations

The YVA workstation is the place where the YVA volunteer actually provides volunteer service. According to Young Volunteers in ACTION (YVA) Guidelines, a "volunteer [work]station is a public or private nonprofit agency, organization, or institution, as well as a propriety health care organization, in or through which volunteers serve in accordance with program policies." The workstation supervisors are given an orientation by the YVA project director and there is a signed Memorandum of Understanding between the YVA project and workstation.

Workstations at the projects in the evaluation included facilities and activities related to schools and education; community service; city, county, state, and federal government; health and the handicapped; care of the elderly; public safety; and others. Volunteer support for these facilities and activities may be thought of as a contribution to the communities in which the workstations were located. The effect of the YVA volunteers on the workstations is one of the study areas for this evaluation. There was an average of 15 workstations per project with a range of 8 to 51 workstations (N=18).

In gathering information on the effect of YVA on the volunteer workstation, ACTION interviewed 160 workstation supervisors; 151 cases were used for actual analysis. (See section on Tabulation, Weighting, and Analysis of Data.) These were individuals who provided direct guidance and supervision to YVA volunteers. At 13 projects, the YVA project director was also a workstation supervisor for some volunteers.

Thirty-four percent (34%) of the workstation supervisors indicated that the YVA volunteers had been volunteers at the workstation prior to the beginning of YVA (N=146). At the workstations at which the volunteers had been converted to YVA volunteers, there was an average of 14 volunteers who had been so converted. In these instances, YVA was not providing new volunteer opportunities for youth but was incorporating into the program youth who were already volunteers at the workstations.

As can be seen in Table 5, the workstation supervisors at almost three-quarters (72%) of the workstations felt that there was an increase in services at the workstations as a result of the presence of the YVA volunteers. About half of them felt that services were continued (55%) at the workstation which might not have been continued without the aid of YVA volunteers and new services were started (47%) at the workstation as a result of the presence of the YVA volunteers. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the volunteers, themselves, reported that they were the first person to perform the work that they were doing at their workstations (N=302).

TABLE 5

EFFECT ON WORKSTATION SERVICES
DUE TO THE ASSIGNMENT OF YVA VOLUNTEERS

Category	Percent of Workstations
Increase in volunteer services (N=141)	72
Continuation of services which might not have been continued (N=145)	55
New services started (N=146)	47

In addition, on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 being "a lot", the workstation supervisors rated the extent to which YVA volunteer activities improved the general delivery of services of their organization. The average rating was 3.7 (N=146). Sixty-four percent (64%) of the supervisors gave one of the two highest ratings (4 or 5).

This information indicates that the YVA volunteers were perceived as having a positive effect on the workstations where they were assigned.

EFFECT ON YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

This chapter addresses the extent to which the YVA program achieved its goals of increasing volunteerism among youth and the effects that the YVA program had upon youth volunteers.

Effects of YVA on Youth Volunteerism

The effects of YVA on youth volunteers are examined from two perspectives: that of the volunteers themselves by seeking to determine how and why they became involved in volunteering; and, from that of the project directors and workstation supervisors, by seeking to determine the effects of the increase in youth volunteer opportunities created by the YVA projects. Beyond the consideration of how youth became volunteers, this section also addresses the question of whether or not volunteering provided a rewarding experience that would encourage further volunteering. (Specific ways in which volunteers may have benefited from their YVA experience are dealt with in the second section of this chapter, entitled Effects of YVA on the Volunteer). This question is examined from both the perspective of the project directors and the volunteers. Project directors were asked questions which sought to determine whether or not they considered the experience of YVA volunteers to have been rewarding. YVA volunteers were asked various questions to determine whether or not they considered the experience to have been satisfying, whether or not they themselves would do further volunteer work and whether or not they would encourage others to volunteer.

The overwhelming majority of the volunteers (61%) first heard about YVA at school (N=302), highlighting the importance of the YVA project directors working with local school authorities in attempting to institutionalize the YVA program. (The subject of institutionalizing the YVA project is discussed in the next chapter.) A large number of youth also first heard about YVA through a friend (18%). The places that volunteers first heard about YVA are documented in Table 6.

When presented a list of possible reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer, 89% said they did so out of a desire to help others; 70% wanted a new experience or to meet new and different people. (See Table 7.) Close to two-thirds (62%) said they wanted to learn new skills and close to half (48%) said they wanted career experience.

TABLE 6

PLACES WHERE VOLUNTEERS FIRST HEARD ABOUT YVA

(N=302)

Category	Percent	Category	Percent	Category	Percent
School	61	Church	7	Radio	*
Friends	18	Poster	2	Other	9
Family	7	Newspaper	*		

* Less than one percent

TABLE 7

REASONS FOR BECOMING A YVA VOLUNTEER

(N=302)

Reason	Percent Selecting[a]
Desire to help others	89
Wanted a new experience	70
Wanted to meet new and different people	70
Wanted to learn new skills	62
Wanted career experience	48
Friends or classmates were joining YVA	27
Wanted or needed something to do	24
Wanted to meet school requirements	16
Friends or classmates were already YVA's	15
Was already a volunteer at the workstation	9
Wanted to meet requirements of some other organization	9
Not sure why joined	4
Other reasons	16

[a]Column totals more than 100% as respondents could choose more than one reason.

To determine whether or not there was a lasting effect of any of the reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer reported in Table 7, correlation coefficients (a measure of the degree of association between two variables) were calculated for each of these reasons with two measures of sustained volunteer interest: the number of hours worked each week as a YVA volunteer and the frequency of reporting for volunteer work at the time of interview. The correlations were relatively small; however, a pattern did emerge. There was a significant positive association between the number of hours worked and the selection of the following reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer: wanted career experience, wanted to learn new skills, and wanted a new experience. These same reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer were also positively associated with the frequency of reporting to the workstation. The fact that these measures rather than the others reported in Table 7 are associated with these measures of volunteer behavior suggest that YVA volunteers contribute most to YVA when they see YVA as a way of developing their own abilities.

For 63% of the volunteers, this was their first volunteer experience (N=302). Of the 37% that had been volunteers before, about half (51%) did something different from and about half (49%) did something similar to what they were now doing as YVA volunteers. Those who had been volunteers before had served an average of 21 months as non-YVA volunteers (N=116).

The use of YVA volunteers also represented the first time 38% of the workstations had used youth volunteers (N=302). At the end of the two years of ACTION funding, directors of YVA projects indicated that virtually all workstation supervisors perceived youth as a resource for volunteer work.

The YVA project directors were asked to rate the degree to which the establishment of their YVA project increased the number of volunteer opportunities for youth in their communities on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "slightly" and 5 being "considerably". The average score was 4.6 (N=18). All of the directors gave one of the two highest ratings (4 or 5). Based on these two sets of observations, it would appear that YVA made it easier for a young person to become a volunteer in his or her community.

The workstation supervisors were asked whether or not the increased volunteer opportunities made it easier for the youth in the community to volunteer. They rated the extent to which the YVA program made it easier to volunteer at an average of 4.1 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot" (N=138). Seventy-five percent (75%) of the supervisors gave one of the two highest ratings (4 or 5).

The 18 project directors were asked to what extent they felt that their project was accomplishing the program goals of providing service learning to the volunteers, creating a sense of self-worth in the volunteers, creating a sense of civic pride in the volunteers, and creating a sense of community service in the volunteers. The results as recorded in Table 8 indicate that the project directors felt that the projects were doing well in accomplishing these goals. They gave an average rating of 4.3 or higher in each of these four areas. The data collectors, however, in their impressionistic accounts questioned the degree of service learning that can be anticipated for a youth who serves on a short-term or ad hoc basis, e.g., serving as a monitor at a walkathon.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot", the youth rated their satisfaction in serving as a YVA volunteer as a 4.5 (average rating) with 93% of the volunteers selecting the two highest ratings (4 and 5) (N=302).

Of the reasons for becoming a YVA volunteer, satisfaction was only found to be significantly positively associated (correlated) with having become a YVA volunteer because of a desire to obtain career experience. This suggests that volunteers who joined YVA for career experience were the most likely to be satisfied with their YVA experience.

There was also a significant positive association between the number of hours worked and the degree of satisfaction. Further, degree of satisfaction was also positively associated with the frequency of reporting to the workstation, although the strength of the association was not strong enough to be significant. This difference between these two measures of volunteer behavior suggests that the YVA experience may be more satisfying for volunteers who are able to work a greater number of hours each week--simply reporting to work more frequently is not as important. These measures of association do not necessarily mean, however, that if volunteers can be coerced to work more hours that they will have a more satisfying experience. Rather, they may simply indicate that those who find the YVA experience personally rewarding tend to put in more time.

The YVA volunteers were asked to rate the likelihood that they would continue to do volunteer work in school, do volunteer work as an adult, and encourage others to do volunteer work. The tabulation of their responses is shown in Table 9.

The volunteers appeared to be slightly more inclined to encourage others to do volunteer work than to continue to do volunteer work themselves. Nevertheless, there is an indication of continued volunteer work among the YVA volunteers included in this evaluation.

TABLE 8

EXTENT TO WHICH DIRECTORS PERCEIVED THEIR YVA PROJECTS TO HAVE ACCOMPLISHED PROGRAM GOALS

(N=18)

Category	Average Rating	Percent Selecting[a] 4 or 5
Provided service learning to the volunteers	4.7	95
Created a sense of self-worth in the volunteers	4.8	94
Created a sense of civic pride in the volunteers	4.3	83
Created a sense of community service in the volunteers	4.7	100

TABLE 9

CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT IN VOLUNTEERING BY YVA VOLUNTEERS

Category	Average Rating	Percent Selecting[a] 4 or 5
Continue volunteer work in school (N=302)	4.4	86
Do volunteer work as an adult (N=300)	4.0	73
Encourage others to do volunteer work (N=302)	4.5	91

[a]On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot"

Effects of YVA on the Volunteer

The YVA program seeks to address the needs of low-income communities not only through the selection of low-income recipients but also through the selection of youth volunteers from low-income families. While the demographic characteristics of YVA volunteers were assessed in an earlier chapter of this evaluation, this section addresses specific types of effects the YVA program had on this population of youth volunteers. Effects on the volunteers relating specifically to volunteerism were examined in the first section of this chapter.

The young people reported working as YVA volunteers an average of 5.7 hours a week (N=289). Their frequency of service as reported by them is shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10

FREQUENCY OF SERVICE BY YVA VOLUNTEERS AS REPORTED BY THE VOLUNTEERS

(N=295)

Category	Percent of Volunteers Reporting[a]
Three or more times a week	31
Once or twice a week	46
Twice a month	12
Once a month	9
Less than once a month	3

[a]Not equal to 100 percent due to rounding

When asked to describe their roles as YVA volunteers in terms of standard occupational categories, 68% of them felt they were fulfilling professional or technical types of roles (N=302). (See Table 11.) The primary occupations within the profession or technical roles in which the YVA volunteers worked were social work (24%) and education (19%). The chief other category in which YVA volunteers worked was that of service worker or private household worker (12%).

TABLE 11

YVA VOLUNTEER ROLES

(N=296)

Occupational Category	Percent Selecting this Category
Professional or Technical Medical (9%) Legal (*) Education (19%) Business (4%) Arts (5%) Engineer/Scientist (1%) Social Work (24%) Other (6%)	68
Manager or Administrator	2
Sales Worker	2
Clerical Worker	8
Craftsperson	7
Machine Operator or Laborer	1
Farmer, Farm Manager or Laborer	0
Service Worker or Private Household Worker	12
Homemaker	*

* Less than one percent

The volunteers were asked to rate their career planning on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot", at two points in time--before they became a YVA volunteer and at the time of the interview. Their sense of career planning increased from an average of 3.5 (N=301) to 4.2 (N=298) during this period of volunteer activity which indicates that they gained a better sense of their career plans while being YVA volunteers.

The volunteers were also asked to assess themselves at two points in time--before they became a YVA volunteer and at the time of the interview--in these areas: sense of community service; ability to work with community members; ability to work with supervisors; career planning; willingness to learn something new; and need for supervision. They rated themselves on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 being "a lot". The workstation supervisors also assessed each YVA volunteer in the same areas at two points in time--when the youth first became a YVA volunteer and at the time of the interview. The results of these two assessments can be seen in Table 12.

In both assessments, the youth showed improvement during the period from when they became YVA volunteers and the time of the interviews which was an average of eight months with a range of 1 to 48. The volunteers' self-assessment tended to show a greater amount of positive change; however, the workstation supervisors tended to rate the volunteers higher at the start than the volunteers rated themselves and the ratings of the volunteers and supervisors were similar at the end. It is noteworthy that the workstation supervisors rated the largest change in the decreased need for supervision and that the highest "now" scores were in the willingness to learn something new area. All changes are statistically significant.

The volunteers were asked to what extent their YVA work made a positive difference to themselves, at their workstations, and within their communities. They recorded their responses on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 being "a lot". (See Table 13.) Their responses indicated that they perceived that the positive effect of their YVA work was smaller for each successively broader area of effect. However, Table 14 indicates that the volunteers felt that their understanding improved most for such successively broader areas of effect as a result of YVA.

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 being "a lot", the volunteers rated how the YVA experience had helped them to better understand how they can help their communities, community needs and problems, how organizations work, and themselves. The results, as shown in Table 14, indicate that the youth gained understanding through the YVA volunteer experience and that, of these four topics, they learned the most about how they can help their communities (N=299).

This is an indication of increased self-esteem among the volunteers. The large positive change in the sense of community service, which is found by comparing the volunteers self-assessments at two points in time, serves to reinforce the data on how the volunteers perceived they could help their community and understand their community needs or problems at the time the interview was conducted.

TABLE 12

SELF-ASSESSMENT BY YVA VOLUNTEERS
AND
ASSESSMENT OF YVA VOLUNTEERS BY WORKSTATION SUPERVISORS

Area	Average Rating BEFORE	NOW	Change[a]
Sense of community service			
- Volunteers (N=301/300)	3.1	4.3	+ 1.2
- Supervisors (N=284/284)	3.8	4.4	+ 0.6
Ability to work with community members			
- Volunteers (N=302/300)	3.7	4.5	+ 0.8
- Supervisors (N=277/278)	4.0	4.5	+ 0.5
Ability to work with supervisors			
- Volunteers (N=301/300)	3.7	4.4	+ 0.7
- Supervisors (N=277/278)	4.0	4.5	+ 0.5
Career planning			
- Volunteers (N=301/289)	3.5	4.2	+ 0.7
- Supervisors (N=218/217)	3.4	4.0	+ 0.6
Willingness to learn something new			
- Volunteers (N=302/300)	4.1	4.7	+ 0.6
- Supervisors (N=283/284)	4.3	4.5	+ 0.2
Need for supervision[b]			
- Volunteers (N=301/298)	2.7	2.2	- 0.5
- Supervisors (N=284/286)	2.8	2.0	- 0.8

[a]All changes are statistically significant at the 0.0001 level.
[b]As 1 is "a little" and 5 "a lot", need for supervision is the one area where 1 is the "highest" rating.

Table 13

POSITIVE DIFFERENCE MADE BY THEIR WORK
AS PERCEIVED BY THE YVA VOLUNTEERS

Category	Average Rating	Percent Selecting[a] 4 or 5
Made a positive difference to them (N=300)	4.6	94
Made a positive difference at their workstation (N=296)	4.2	82
Made a positive difference within the community	4.0	76

TABLE 14

GAINING OF UNDERSTANDING THROUGH THE YVA EXPERIENCE

(N=299)

Category	Average Rating	Percent Selecting 5[a]
How they can help their community	4.5	60
Community needs or problems	4.2	48
How organizations work	4.1	42
Themselves	4.1	36

[a]On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot"

In examining the reasons why young persons volunteer their time to YVA in the last section, Effects of YVA on Youth Volunteerism, it was noted that those who joined the YVA program as volunteers because they wanted career experience, wanted to learn new skills, and wanted a new experience were more likely to put in more hours and report to the workstation more frequently as well as enjoy a greater degree of satisfaction with the YVA experience. Satisfaction with YVA was also found to be directly correlated with having joined YVA because of a desire to obtain career experience. In sum, although the degree of the association was small, there was a consistent pattern which indicated that YVA volunteers contribute most to YVA when they see YVA as a way of developing their own abilities.

The measures of the number of hours worked per week and the frequency of reporting were also correlated with the supervisor assessments shown in Table 12. It was found that the supervisors felt that the volunteers who worked more hours had achieved a greater degree of career planning. Supervisors also felt that volunteers who worked more hours had a greater ability to work with community members. Finally, supervisors also felt that volunteers who worked more hours and reported more frequently needed less supervision.

Volunteers were also asked specifically about the extent to which YVA helped to clarify their ideas for their future career or occupation and their ideas for their future training or education. Both of these measures exhibited significant positive associations with the number of hours worked per week and the frequency of reporting to the workstation.

The number of hours worked per week and the frequency of reporting to the workstation were also significantly positively associated with the extent to which the volunteer feels that the contacts made through YVA will help in the future and the extent to which their work in YVA has made a positive difference to themselves. This suggests that the volunteers associate rewards to their YVA service which go beyond an increase in self-understanding. Interestingly, a significant positive association was also found between the number of hours worked per week and the extent to which the volunteers felt that their YVA work made a positive difference to their workstations and made a positive difference within the community in which they worked. (The frequency of reporting for YVA work was not significantly related to these measures.) These finding suggest that volunteers who work more hours are more likely to find the experience rewarding--and that it may be rewarding in ways which go beyond personal benefit.

It was also found that volunteers whose family members and other persons took an interest in their YVA work as of the time of interview tended to report more frequently for YVA work.

The data presented in this chapter indicate that YVA had a positive effect on youth volunteerism which may be lasting and that there was a consistent pattern of positive effects of YVA on the volunteer and his or her community. The positive effects on the volunteer and the community appear to be quite diverse even though the reason the volunteer appears to work more hours and report more frequently to the volunteer workstation appears to be a particular interest in developing career and educational plans.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF YVA

The institutionalization of YVA refers to the development of youth volunteer projects which will continue after federal support ends. Here, "federal support" is taken to mean both financial support as well as support for the development of a particular type of organization through the specification of an organizational structure and the oversight role.

The primary aspect of institutionalization on which this evaluation focuses is the development of local funding sources since not having funding could mean an end to a local project. However, this evaluation also examines community interest and involvement in the YVA program inasmuch as such interest and involvement are in and of themselves types of institutionalization. That is, a project such as YVA can only survive if it also receives the non-financial support of the community. Of course, community support may also be related to financial support and this evaluation also attempts to determine whether or not non-financial community involvement is related to financial support.

Other chapters of this report are, in part, concerned with the effect of the YVA program on the workstations to which youth were assigned and the spirit of volunteerism. To the extent that the YVA program improved the functioning of the workstations and promoted volunteerism, we may also see a positive relationship to the institutionalization of YVA.

Development of Local Funding

The information for this section was derived from two rounds of interviews with the YVA project directors: on-site data collection which was from April 28 to June 2, 1985 and telephone follow-up data collection which was from August 30 to September 16, 1985. The final year of the grant period for each project in the evaluation ended on September 30, 1985.

No ACTION funding is provided after the first two years, the expectation being that the local project will find alternative sources of funding. YVA project directors used the term "transition" in reference to the change to non-ACTION funding sources. At the end of the grant period, six of the 18 projects reported having full funding and another eight had partial funding. (See Table 15.)

As noted in the introduction to this report, in the second year of ACTION funding the sponsor must generate a local contribution equal to 25% of the federal contribution, 15% of which must be a

cash contribution. Sponsors, and therefore the project directors as employees of the sponsor, are thereby encouraged to look for and develop outside sources of funding for the second year. This serves as preparation for the end of ACTION funding after two years. Table 15 shows that the third-year funding status of the majority of the projects did not change much during the last four months of federal funding. This suggests that early involvement of outside funding sources in YVA was important in terms of continuing the program.

TABLE 15

PROJECT FUNDING FOR THE THIRD YEAR

Category	On-Site Data Collection[a]		Telephone Follow-Up[b]	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent[c]
No Funding	5	28	4	22
Partial Funding	8	44	8	44
Full Funding	5	28	6	33

[a]April 28-June 2, 1985
[b]August 30-September 26, 1985
[c]Percentages do not total to 100 due to rounding.

Table 16 shows the sources of the additional 15% funding for the second year and also whether or not the projects which obtained second-year funding from the indicated sources eventually received no, partial, or full third-year funding. (Note that the source of the third-year funding is unspecified in Table 16.) The YVA project sponsor's budget was the most likely source of funding for at least some of the additional 15% funding for the second year. A full 50% of the projects received at least some of their additional second-year funding from their sponsoring organization. Table 17 also shows that of those that received 15% of their second-year funding directly from their sponsor, 77% eventually obtained either partial or full third-year funding (source unspecified). This suggests that having strong sponsor support provides a good basis for eventual institutionalization of a YVA project. It also suggests that early sponsor support may be a good indicator of future institutionalization.

TABLE 16

SOURCE OF FUNDS EQUAL TO 15% OF FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF OPERATION FOR PROJECTS HAVING NO, PARTIAL, OR FULL THIRD-YEAR FUNDING

Source of 15% Contribution for Second Year	Percent of Projects Indicating Source[a] (N=18)	Distribution of 15% Second-Year Funding by Third-Year Funding Categories[b]		
		NO FUNDING	PARTIAL FUNDING	FULL FUNDING
Sponsor's budget	50% (9)	22% (2)	33% (3)	44% (4)
Other sources	17% (3)	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)
Private sources and foundations	17% (3)	33% (1)	67% (2)	0% (0)
United Way	17% (3)	33% (1)	67% (2)	0% (0)
Local or state government sources	17% (3)	67% (2)	33% (1)	0% (0)
Local business	6% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
Don't know	6% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (1)
Schools, school systems, etc.	6% (1)	0% (0)	100% (1)	0% (0)

[a]Column totals more than 100% because 15% funding share for second year may have been obtained from more than one source.
[b]Rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

When asked whether or not they would have the same sponsor in the third year of the program, nine projects (50%) with either partial or full funding for the third year stated that they would have the same sponsor. Two additional projects (11%) were uncertain whether or not they would have the same sponsor. This represents further evidence that the sponsor plays an important role in supporting the YVA project.

Table 17 presents the sources of funding for the projects for the third year. Table 17 shows that the most likely (28%) and largest average source for third-year funding ($13,330) was the YVA sponsor. The table also shows, however, that no one type of funding source can be identified as being associated with a large number of projects receiving a full funding (from all sources combined). The lack of a likely single source for full funding may encourage project directors to seek multiple funding sources.

The average number of third-year funding sources for the projects was 1.7.

In a further attempt to identify the characteristics of those YVA projects which were more likely to survive, the project directors were asked to indicate the groups represented on their project advisory councils. These data were then tabulated for those with no third-year funding, partial funding and full funding.

Examining Table 18, we see that having larger percentages of the advisory council composed of representatives from other non-profit organizations; church, clergy, and other religious organizations and individuals; parents, including PTA's and other parent groups; and businesses appears directly related to having partial or full funding. In the case of the representation of the remainder of the groups on the project advisory council, there is no clear trend.

In part, the data in Table 18 may indicate that it is important to have a diversity of groups represented on the project advisory council. Even in the clearest cases of an association between a large percentage of members of a group (other non-profit organizations; or church, clergy, and other religious organizations and individuals) and greater degrees of funding, the members of these groups were only represented on a maximum of 39% of the project advisory councils of those projects having full funding. This interpretation also fits with the earlier finding that the average number of third-year funding sources for the projects was 1.7.

Beyond examining the characteristics of the YVA projects and the sponsors and other organizations with which they were associated, we asked the project directors about the help they received. Project directors were asked to rate the amount of assistance they needed to prepare for non-ACTION funding on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot". With 16 of the 118 project directors responding, the average rating was 2.8. When the project directors were asked whether or not they received the assistance they needed, 14 of the 18 (78%) replied that they had.

TABLE 17

SOURCE OF PROJECT FUNDING FOR THE THIRD YEAR
FOR PROJECTS HAVING PARTIAL OR FULL FUNDING

Source	Overall Average Amount of Funding and Percent of Projects Indicating Source[a]		Distribution of Third-Year Financial Support by Funding Category[b]	
			PARTIAL FUNDING (N=8)	FULL FUNDING (N=6)
LOCAL SOURCES				
Sponsor	$13,330	28% (5)	60% (3)	40% (2)
Local foundation grant	$ 9,312	11% (2)	0% (0)	100% (2)
Civic or non-profit group	$ 7,767	17% (3)	67% (2)	33% (1)
Corporation or local business	$ 2,700	11% (2)	100% (2)	0% (0)
School system	$ 2,000	6% (1)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Fundraising by project	$ 700	17% (3)	67% (2)	33% (1)
NON-LOCAL SOURCES				
Federal block grants	$ 8,500	6% (1)	100% (1)	0% (0)
Other federal grants	$ 6,000	6% (1)	100% (1)	0% (0)
National foundation grants	$ 3,720	6% (1)	100% (1)	0% (0)
State funds	$ 533	11% (2)	50% (1)	50% (1)
OTHER SOURCES				
Other income	$ 4,487	17% (3)	33% (1)	67% (2)

[a] Column totals more than 100% because third-year funding may have been obtained from more than one source.
[b] Rows may not total to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 18

GROUPS REPRESENTED ON THE ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR PROJECTS HAVING NO, PARTIAL, OR FULL THIRD-YEAR FUNDING

Type of Group	Percent of Projects Having Group on Advisory Council[a] (N=18)	Distribution of Advisory Council Members by Third-Year Funding Category[b]		
		NO FUNDING (N=4)	PARTIAL FUNDING (N=8)	FULL FUNDING (N=6)
Other non-profit organizations	33% (6)	17% (1)	33% (2)	50% (3)
Church, clergy, and other religious organizations and individuals	39% (7)	14% (1)	43% (3)	43% (3)
Parents, including PTA's and other parent groups	22% (4)	25% (1)	25% (1)	50% (2)
Business	56% (7)	20% (2)	40% (4)	40% (4)
Schools, including school boards of education, etc.; student groups, etc.	83% (15)	27% (4)	40% (6)	33% (5)
Service, civic, and community groups and members	72% (13)	23% (3)	46% (6)	31% (4)
Local, county, and state officials or organizations, including courts and DA's	61% (11)	27% (3)	55% (6)	18% (2)
Other	44% (8)	38% (3)	38% (3)	25% (2)

[a]Column totals more that 100% because project advisory council members may represent more than one group.
[b]Rows may not total to 100% due to rounding.

In the telephone follow-up interview, project directors were also asked to rate the helpfulness of their sponsor and ACTION State, Regional, and Headquarters offices. Specifically, they were asked to rate the quality of the assistance received from these offices on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 was "a little" and 5 "a lot". A zero was assigned if the project director indicated that he or she received no assistance from an office. The results are presented in Table 19.

TABLE 19

RATING BY PROJECT DIRECTORS OF ASSISTANCE RECEIVED FOR TRANSITION TO NON-ACTION FUNDING

Source of Assistance	Received any Assistance	Average Rating of Assistance Received on a Scale of 0 to 5
Sponsor	94% (N=16)	4.2 (N=17)
ACTION State Office	61% (N=11)	1.8 (N=18)
ACTION Regional Office	44% (N=8)	1.2 (N=18)
ACTION Headquarters	56% (N=10)	1.3 (N=18)

Table 19 shows that the sponsors were the most helpful in providing assistance in obtaining third-year funding. Generally, the further the office was located from the project, the less assistance the project received. This pattern does not hold for ACTION regional and headquarters offices. The headquarters office was rated roughly equally as helpful as the regional office; however, more of the projects reported receiving any assistance from the headquarters office. This finding is not too surprising since it was the ACTION headquarters office which conducted formal training conferences for the project directors.

Community Support for the YVA Program

YVA project directors were asked a number of questions regarding the extent of community participation in the YVA program.

Project directors were asked to rate the involvement of parents and other community members in the YVA project on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot". An assessment was requested for both the first and second year of the project so as to determine whether or not there had been any change over time. The results appear in Table 20.

TABLE 20

PROJECT DIRECTORS' RATINGS OF INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE YVA PROJECT*

Category	First Year	Second Year	Change
Involvement of parents	1.9 (N=18)	2.8 (N=17)	+0.9
Involvement of other community members	2.6 (N=17)	3.9 (N=17)	+1.3

* On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being "a little" and 5 "a lot"

Table 20 shows that the ratings of parental involvement were in the low to medium range of the scale. However, the table shows that involvement increased from the first to the second year. The involvement of other community members was also judged to have been greater in the second year.

Because this is an evaluation of a youth volunteer program, it is reasonable to expect that the success and institutionalization of YVA will heavily depend on the involvement of local schools. Project directors were asked how many junior and senior high schools there were in their service areas as well as the number of them that:

- offered release time to volunteer work,
- offered credit for volunteer work, and
- required volunteer work to pass a course or for graduation.

They were asked to give assessments on the above questions for three points in time: before YVA, during the first year of the

YVA project and during the second year of the YVA project. Using the numbers of each type of school in the service area, it is possible for us to calculate percentages for each of these measures.

Project directors were also asked to indicate the number of junior and senior high schools that:

- allowed YVA recruiting at the school by YVA personnel,
- allowed YVA recruiting at the school by school personnel, and
- allowed YVA recruiting at the school by both YVA and school personnel.

They were asked to give assessments on the above questions for two points in time: during the first year and the second year of the YVA project. The average percentages for the 18 YVA projects of junior and senior high schools involved in these activities are shown in Table 21.

Table 21 shows that although the average percentages of those schools offering release time for volunteer work, offering credit for volunteer work or requiring volunteer work to pass a course or for graduation were small, there were consistent increases in each of these areas over time. In the case of recruiting, large percentages of the schools allowed recruiting by YVA personnel. All types of recruiting increased over the course of the two-year project. Table 22 presents data from similar questions asked of the project directors regarding involvement of the universities and colleges in the YVA service areas.

Table 22 shows that the percentage of universities and colleges that offered credit for volunteer work or required volunteer work to pass a course or for graduation was considerably higher than what was found for junior and senior high schools. In the case of offering credit for volunteer work, there is evidence of a steady increase over time. However, those requiring volunteer work to pass a course or for graduation appear to have taken a three percent (3%) dip in the second year. This finding is contrary to the general pattern of increased involvement by all the schools and may, in part, be the result of having information for one fewer project for the first year as compared to the period before YVA and the second year.

Table 22 also shows that the percentage of universities and colleges involved in YVA recruitment was quite high and similar to the levels found in junior and senior high schools.

In general, Tables 21 and 22 show a trend toward increased involvement of schools in YVA over time.

TABLE 21

AVERAGE PERCENTAGES OF JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN 18 YVA PROJECTS

(N=16)

Activity	Average Percent Where activity occurred			Change	
	BEFORE YVA	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR
Offered release time for volunteer work	6	12	25	+6%	+13%
Offered credit for volunteer work	1	10	13	+9%	+3%
Required volunteer work to pass a course or for graduation	2[a]	6	7	+4%	+1%
Allowed YVA recruiting at the school by YVA personnel	NA[b]	60	57	NA	+7%
Allowed YVA recruiting at the school by school personnel	NA	36	43	NA	+7%
Allowed YVA recruiting at the school by **both** YVA and school personnel	NA	39	46	NA	+7%

[a] N=15
[b] Not applicable

TABLE 22

AVERAGE PERCENTAGES OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES INVOLVED IN 18 YVA PROJECTS

Activity	Average Percent Where Activity Occurred			Change	
	BEFORE YVA	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR
Offered credit for volunteer work	(N=12) 60	(N=11) 71	(N=12) 74	+11%	+3%
Required volunteer work to pass a course or for graduation	(N=12) 50	(N=11) 59	(N=12) 56	+9%	-3%
Participated in YVA recruitment effort	NA[a]	(N=13) 65	(N=13) 66	NA	+1%

[a]Not applicable

Although a precise process could not be specified, it was thought that YVA projects in areas with greater involvement of parents, other community members, and of the schools might also be more likely to have third-year funding. The reasoning was that areas where there was more involvement in YVA might also have been more visible and seen as likely candidates for receipt of assistance by the sort of groups that are capable of providing support. To test this hypothesis, the data in Tables 20, 21, and 22 were separately tabulated for those projects with no, partial, and full third-year funding. (These data are not presented here.) Our finding was that there was no consistent pattern across levels of third-year funding for any of the variables. That is, although the involvement of parents, other community members, and the schools may be important for the institutionalization of a YVA project, they do not appear to have an effect on the funding of tne YVA program.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted in the introduction, the principal topics of this evaluation are:

- the accomplishment of YVA's poverty goals,
- the effects of YVA on the workstation,
- the effects of YVA on volunteerism,
- the effects of YVA on the volunteer, and
- the evidence of institutionalism of YVA.

The data for this evaluation are representative of the YVA projects which were in their second year of ACTION funding during Fiscal Year 1985 (October 1, 1984 through September 30, 1985), but it may not be representative of all 156 YVA projects that have received ACTION funding.

Accomplishment of YVA Poverty Goals

If measured by the income of the program participants, the projects could be considered weak in accomplishing YVA's poverty goals. Just under half (49%) of the recipients of YVA services were rated by the YVA workstation supervisors to have an income status of poor or near poor. Since one of the objectives of the YVA program is also to involve youth from low-income communities, the demographic profile of the YVA volunteers was also examined. Using the YVA volunteers self-assessments, 10% of them came from families with a poor or near poor income status.

The data collected as well as the impressionistic accounts of the data collectors for this evaluation indicate that sponsors and project directors would benefit from additional technical guidance on how to recruit youth volunteers from low-income families.

Effects of YVA on the Workstation

YVA volunteers were important sources of support to the workstations in terms of the ability of the workstations to increase the services they provided to the community. Workstation supervisors also indicated that YVA volunteers significantly contributed to the continuation of services that otherwise might have been discontinued or were the reason why it was possible to start new services. There was also an indication of improvement of the general delivery of services of the organizations of which the YVA workstations were a part.

At 34% of the workstations, the supervisors indicated that the YVA volunteers had been volunteers at those workstations prior to the beginning of YVA. In such instances, it is not known whether or not these persons would have continued to have been volunteers without the presence of YVA.

Effects of YVA on Volunteerism

The YVA projects may be considered highly successful in terms of promoting a spirit of volunteerism among youth. A significant number of YVA volunteers (63%) used the YVA project as an opportunity to volunteer for the first time. Furthermore, schools were found to be extremely important sources of information for the volunteers regarding the availability of volunteer opportunities.

With regard to the creation of volunteer opportunities, a large percentage of the workstations involved in the YVA project used youth volunteers for the first time as the result of the YVA project. According to YVA project directors, the YVA project considerably increased the number of volunteer opportunities open to youth.

There is evidence to suggest that many of the youth may continue to do volunteer work in the future and to suggest volunteer work to their friends. The willingness of YVA volunteers to recommend volunteering to their friends is important since the second most frequent way in which YVA volunteers first heard about YVA was through a friend.

Effects of YVA on the Volunteer

YVA volunteers appear to have gained important experience which will be useful to themselves in making the transition from being a student to being a responsible member of their community. The young people who served as YVA volunteers gained a better understanding of their career objectives, improved their ability to work with their supervisors, and decreased in their need for supervision. They also developed their ability to work with community members and increased their sense of community service. Such conclusions were reached on the basis of information from both the volunteers and their supervisors.

It is also interesting to note that the supervisors rated the volunteers higher at the start of the YVA project than did the volunteers rate themselves. At the end of the YVA project, however, there was closer agreement between the supervisors and the volunteers, and there was positive change on all dimensions. Such data suggest that the YVA project had a positive effect on the self-esteem of the volunteers. The impressionistic accounts

of the data collectors for this evaluation, however, question the degree of service learning that can be anticipated for a youth who serves on a short-term or ad hoc basis, e.g., serving as a monitor at a walkathon.

A positive association was found between two measures of the volunteer's level of effort--the number of hours the volunteer works per week and the frequency of the volunteer reporting to the workstation--and the volunteer's clarification of occupational and educational plans. The extent of the association was not strong, but a consistent pattern was found on a variety of measures. This does not necessarily mean that forcing an increase in the number of hours worked will result in greater clarification of the volunteer's plans. Instead, it seems more likely that volunteers who view the YVA program as a means to clarifying their plans are more motivated to work harder.

Institutionalization of YVA

One of the objectives of the YVA program was to develop opportunities for youth volunteering which would be self-sustaining. Since ACTION funding for a YVA project lasted a maximum of two years, this evaluation examined differences among projects with no, partial, and full third-year funding to determine what factors contributed to a project continuing for a third year.

Thirty-three percent (33%), or six, of the projects reported having full funding for the third year of operations, and 44%, or eight, reported having partial funding. Third-year funding status did not change in the last several months of federal funding. Further, it was found that third-year funding status may be strongly related to early sponsor support. That is, projects which obtained the required local cash contributions equal to 15% of the federal funding directly from their sponsor were more likely to have partial for full third-year funding, even though all of these projects received only part or none of their third-year funding directly from their sponsors. It is not known whether or not this is a pattern that will repeat itself. That is, it is unclear whether or not there is a cause and effect relationship between a sponsor providing a modest amount of second-year funding and eventual location of full third-year funding. However, the suggestion is that there were sponsors that developed a commitment to a YVA project which went beyond providing direct financial support.

Although sponsors were the most likely and largest average source for third-year funding, no one source of funding could be consistently identified with providing full third-year funding. Even with strong sponsor support, most YVA projects had more than one source for third-year funding.

In terms of receiving assistance in obtaining third-year funding, project directors received the most assistance from their sponsors, followed by ACTION state offices, ACTION headquarters, and ACTION regional offices. There appears to have been almost a perfect inverse relationship between the distance from the source of assistance and the amount of assistance received. That is, the closer the source of assistance to the YVA project, the greater was the amount of assistance that was received. The fact that the ACTION headquarters office was rated as having provided more assistance in obtaining third-year funding than the ACTION regional offices may be related to the fact that the ACTION headquarters office provided formal training conferences for the project directors each year.

The support of parents and other community members increased over time, as did the involvement of junior and senior high schools, universities, and colleges. While the support and involvement of such persons and organizations is important for the continued success of a program which needs to develop interest in volunteering among young people, the participation of such individuals and groups was found to be unrelated to third-year funding. The impressionistic accounts of the data collectors for this evaluation suggest that two years of ACTION funding may be too short a time to develop sufficient support among such persons and groups to expect them to help develop third-year funding sources.

Recommendations

Based on the positive effect of the YVA program on the promotion of volunteerism, the exposure of volunteers to experiences which will make them more responsible members of their communities, and the development of self-esteem among youth volunteers which is shown in the data collected, it is recommended that ACTION continue to provide and/or encourage volunteer opportunities for young Americans. However, it would appear beneficial to develop guidelines and technical assistance for recruiting low-income youth.

In the creation of volunteer opportunities for youth, one of the most successful methods of alerting youth to such opportunities was through their schools. It is recommended that working with schools be considered a principal focus of such programs.

It appears that youth are willing to work hard in a volunteer program if they perceive that the program will be of personal benefit to them, particularly in terms of developing their career and educational plans. It also appears that the YVA program had a consistent pattern of benefits for the youth in such areas as their understanding of their communities and their ability to work with their supervisors. Moreover, the YVA program had

positive benefits for the communities in which the volunteers were located. It is recommended that volunteer programs for youth recognize and promote their career and educational interests as a way of attracting youth to volunteer service in exchange for a rewarding experience which will also be of benefit to their community.

In terms of the continuance of such projects after the end of ACTION funding, it appears that projects that received strong support from their sponsors were those that were most likely to continue, even if all of their third-year funding did not come from their sponsors. In funding youth projects, it would seem prudent to attempt to identify sponsors who indicate a strong willingness to provide assistance beyond that required by the grant.